



U.S. Department of Justice  
United States Attorney  
District of Kansas

## NEWS RELEASE

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## U.S. ATTORNEY ANNOUNCES SECOND ANNUAL GUARDIAN OF JUSTICE AWARDS

WICHITA, Kan. – United States Attorney Eric Melgren announced today the second annual “United States Attorney’s **Guardian of Justice**” awards. These awards are given to federal and state law enforcement officers in recognition of invaluable service provided in the prosecution of a significant case by the United States Attorney’s office. These awards are the highest recognition given a member of the law enforcement community by the United States Attorney’s office.

Melgren announces that **Special Agents Karl Nichols and Roger Hanzlik** of the Drug Enforcement Administration and **Officer Ralph Sorrell** of the Leavenworth Police Department and the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force have been selected by the United States Attorney’s office as winners of the second annual United States Attorney’s Guardian of Justice awards.

The United States Attorney’s office bestowed these awards at the Guardian of Justice Awards Banquet held at the Wichita Airport Hilton Hotel, Wichita, Kansas, on January 22, 2004.

Melgren said that all three law enforcement officers are being recognized for their excellent work during the investigation and prosecution of **William Leonard Pickard**, Mill Valley, California, and **Clyde Apperson**, Sunnyvale, California, who were convicted on LSD charges on March 31, 2003, following an eleven week jury trial. Pickard was sentenced to life imprisonment without parole and Apperson was sentenced to 30 years imprisonment without parole on November 25, 2003. This case was the single largest seizure of an operable LSD lab in the history of the Drug Enforcement Administration. DEA agents seized approximately 90.86 pounds of LSD, approximately 214.5 pounds of lysergic acid, a precursor to LSD, approximately 51.92 pounds of iso-LSD, a by-product from the manufacture of LSD and 41.8

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pounds of ergocristine, a precursor to LSD with the ability to create an additional 27.28 pounds of LSD. There have been only four seizures of complete LSD labs by the DEA and three of these seizures involved Pickard and Apperson including a lab in Mountainview, California, in 1998, a lab in Oregon in 1996, and this lab in Wamego, Kansas. The seizure of this lab in Wamego had a dramatic impact on the availability of LSD worldwide. A DEA chemist testified at trial that following this seizure, submissions of LSD to the DEA Special Testing and Research Lab dropped by 90 % in 2001, and that there were no LSD seizures submitted for testing in 2002 or 2003.

**Special Agent Nichols** has worked for the Drug Enforcement Administration since January 1988. From 1992 until 1996, Nichols was a member of the LSD Task Force. This task force was established to locate and dismantle LSD manufacturing operations that originated in Northern California. From 1996 until December 2003, Nichols was assigned to the San Francisco Clandestine Laboratory Task Force.

**Special Agent Hanzlik** served as a Captain in the Marine Corps during the first Gulf War. Starting in 1991, Agent Hanzlik worked for the Colorado Spring Police Department followed by the Bureau of Immigration and Custom Enforcement for a total of six years. Agent Hanzlik has worked for the Drug Enforcement Administration since 1997.

**Officer Sorrell** has worked for the Leavenworth Police Department since 1995. From April 1997 through October 2000 and again from October 2002 through December 2003, Sorrell worked as an investigator with the High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HITDA) under the direction of the Drug Enforcement Administration Task Force. Officer Sorrell came to the Leavenworth Police Department after serving fourteen years in the United States Army reaching the rank of Captain. Officer Sorrell graduated from the United States Military Academy at West Point in 1982.

“We recognize that the successful prosecution of a major case such as this could not occur without the dedication and hard work of the law enforcement officers involved,” Melgren said. “Special Agents Nichols and Hanzlik and Officer Sorrell are outstanding law enforcement officers, whose extraordinary efforts in this case went well beyond the call of duty. Their tenacity, analysis, and hard work made this prosecution successful. Our nation is better off for their efforts. We are proud to present them with the 2004 Guardian of Justice Award.”

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